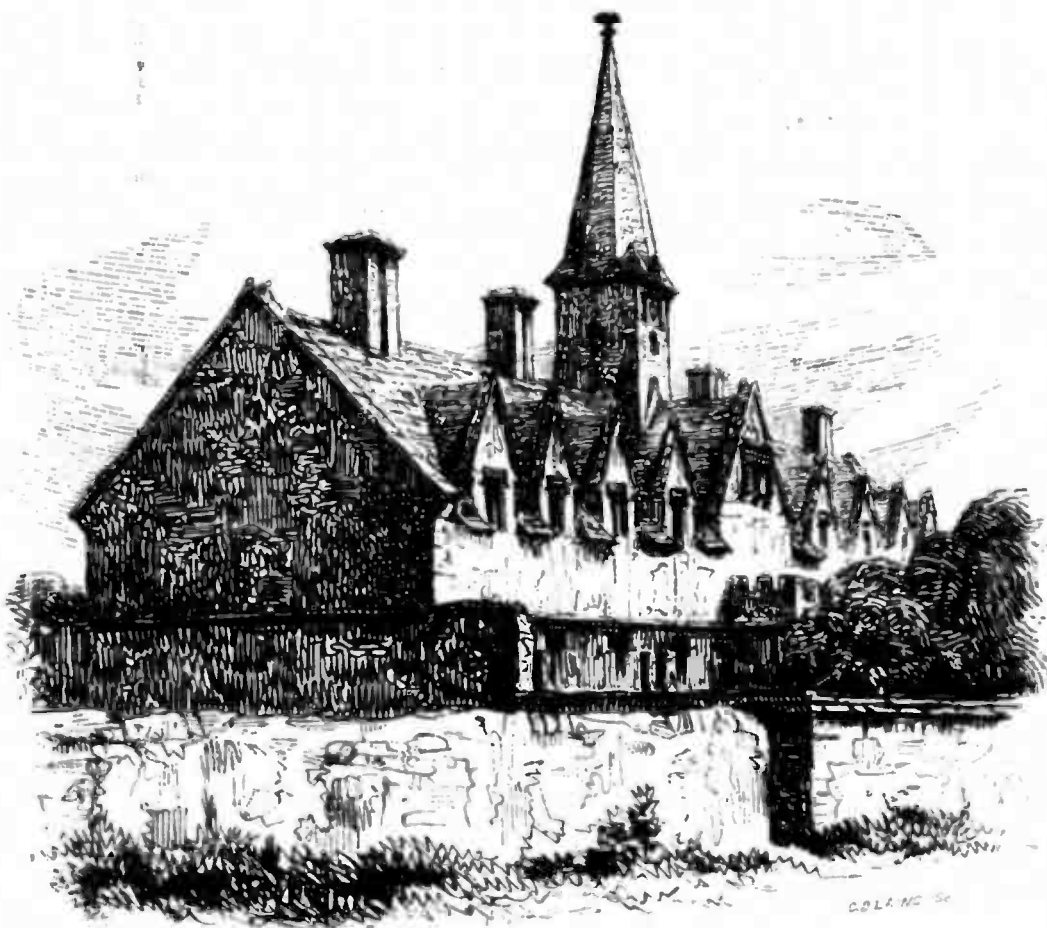


MARSHFIELD ALMSHOUSE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, A.D. 1619.



disliked and condemned,—not condemned publicly, perhaps, because few will care to encounter in open combat so powerful an antagonist. Among those who would willingly make an *auto-da-fé* with the book, if not with the writer, are Catholics, Puginists, and Puseyites; since it not only lauds the Reformation in the highest terms, but speaks of the religion of our forefathers during the palmy times of Gothic architecture and art, as “*sensuous idolatry*,” akin to that of the Egyptians!—“in both times the people were equally priest-ridden,” &c. Neither will archaeologists thank him for animadverting so cavalierly as he has done on their absurdities and extravagances. While as to the veneration of Vitruvius, they will stand aghast on reading what is said of their idolised classic authority, whose writings are declared by Mr. F. to be altogether cold and soulless, utterly devoid of any tincture of art, and no better than what any “uneducated house-carpenter or stonemason” could have produced.

No danger is there of Mr. Fergusson's awful heresies corrupting those who are confirmed in the “good old doctrines” hitherto established and taught: it is the young and uninformed,—the rising generation of architects and critics whom our architectural Luther will gain over to his pernicious new-fangled principles and opinions. And even some of the old school may be not only greatly shocked, but greatly shaken also in their present architectural faith. To give the devil his due,—Fergusson has shown architectural gusto in his own residence. His library is, perhaps, the most artistically-designed apartment in the whole metropolis: others, no doubt, there are of far greater pretension as to size and sumptuousness; but for captivating effect and variety of effect, I know of none that parallel it. To call it superb would be but a clumsy compliment: the proper epithet for it is

delicious: and to such epithet, thanks to the commonplace ideas of architects, there are very few rooms, not only in the whole metropolis but in the whole kingdom, which can justly lay claim.

P. P.

MARSHFIELD ALMSHOUSE,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

THE accompanying sketch represents the almshouse at Marshfield, in Gloucestershire, about eight miles from Bath.* From an inscription in one of the gables, it appears that the building was erected in 1619, by Thomas Crispe, and I understand that it receives four men and the same number of women. The ground plan is nothing more than a rectangular parallelogram, with the projection of a small porch in the middle of the south side, which is the front of the building. Over this porch is a large dormer gable, to which a similar one corresponds on the north side, thus forming an intersection in the ridge of the roof, which is crowned by a plain, but very elegant tower and broach spire of masonry. On the south are four smaller dormer gables on each side of the large central one; each has a square-headed two-light window, with a label. In the central one is a *cinque-cento* composition with shields. The lower windows have also two lights, but without labels; they correspond with the upper, and a string runs above them, and is continued on the east and west ends, if not round the whole building. The ends are in other respects quite plain, and without windows. The north side has only the central gable. As I did not go into the building, my time only allowing me to make such sketches of the exterior as I was anxious to obtain, I cannot tell what the internal arrangements are, nor how the central

spire is supported. The clock, in the face of the tower, is placed under a square-headed label, which is a far better arrangement than if it were in a circle, a figure that ought not to be introduced, except on a very small scale (as in some Norman examples) on the face of any tower of the mediæval styles.

I send you sketches of this building, because I was exceedingly struck with its simplicity and picturesque appearance, the more so, from the evident absence of effort on the part of the architect to make it picturesque. Perhaps indeed it is one of the magical effects of time gradually to remove the appearance of such effort, while it adds to picturesqueness; still I question whether the building I am noticing, if fresh from the tool of the workman, would not contrast favourably with many buildings of the same standard, as schools, &c., of the present day, which, however successful as designs, yet seem to betray too decidedly the attempt at picturesque effect. The somewhat ecclesiastical character of the building appears far from unsuitable to its purposes, and this is increased by the nature of the material, which is the stone of the country, probably the same with which the greater part of Bath is constructed. The wall in front is of rough work, but with a good coping, and the entrance doorway strikes me as remarkably neat. On the whole I cannot help thinking this example well worth study, and for some purposes imitation. The length of the south side or front is about 140 feet.

Brighton.

JOHN LOUIS PETIT.

A CYLINDER, lately cast at Haigh Foundry, Wigan, is 9 feet 4 inches in diameter, and about 17 feet long; weight, about 22 tons; quantity of metal melted, nearly 30 tons. It will sustain a load upon the piston equal to 80 tons, with 14 feet of stroke.

* We have preserved Mr. Petit's characteristic style of drawing by engraving it *fac simile*.—Ed.